

Application No. 09/913,448

Filed: August 14, 2001

TC Art Unit: 1774

Confirmation No.: 9630

REMARKS

The claims in the above-identified application have been rejected as indefinite and/or as obvious over Reuscher et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed for the reasons indicated below and reconsideration is requested.

Indefiniteness rejections

Claim 5 has been amended to delete the term "phosphates" in line 3 and "preferably selected from sodium hydrogen phosphate, sodium dihydrogen phosphate and sodium hypophosphite" in lines 6-8, as suggested by the Examiner.

Claims 7 and 8 have been amended to change the limitations on x and y. Claim 8 has been amended further to delete "preferably" in the definition of "[CD]."

Claim 9 has been amended to delete "preferably selected from." Claim 13 has been amended to delete "solid." Claim 20 has been cancelled.

Therefore, Applicants submit that the rejections for indefiniteness have been overcome.

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Rejection Under §103(a)

Claims 4-20 have been rejected as obvious over Reuscher et al., the Examiner saying, among other things, that a polycarboxylic acid of the type contemplated by Applicants is disclosed in col. 6, line 55. With respect, Applicants point out that at the cited place Reuscher refers to a citrate buffer and not to citric acid in a capacity that could be construed to satisfy the limitation in the first step of claim 11 of "impregnating said fiber with an aqueous solution of a mixture to form an impregnated fiber, said mixture comprising . . . one or more materials selected from the group consisting of poly(carboxylic) acids and poly(carboxylic) acid anhydrides." In this step, the polycarboxylic acid is one of at least two components in a *mixture* that is going to impregnate a fiber to be treated. In contrast, in the prior art reference, citric acid at the cited place would be present in buffering quantities.

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The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned attorney to discuss any matter that would expedite allowance of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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